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second appearance. Two Long-billed Dowitchers were taken on St. Paul Island, August 27, 1920, at Northeast Point. The first record appeared in the Condor (xxii, 1920, p. 173).

The second specimen of a Least Sandpiper, a male, was taken at Northeast Point, St. Paul Island, August 27, 1920. The first, taken by Osgood, was recorded in the Auk (xxxiii, 1916, p. 401).

Two more specimens of the Baird Sandpiper were taken on St. Paul Island in 1920, at Northeast Point, August 12. Three were taken on the same island in 1914 and recorded in the Auk (xxxiii, 1916, p. 401).

It might be added here that the Arctic Tern, Sabine Gull, Pectoral Sandpiper, and Sharp-tailed Sandpiper are more than accidental visitors. The latter two species in particular have been collected in considerable numbers the past few years.

*San Francisco, California, March 1, 1921.*

## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

**Notes on the Hypothetical List of California Birds.**—In "A Distributional List of the Birds of California" (Pacific Coast Avifauna, no. 11, 1915) three species have been placed in the hypothetical list by Dr. Joseph Grinnell on the ground of insufficient evidence, though the specimens are still in the British Museum and were recorded in the "Catalogue of Birds". I have recently (November, 1920) had an opportunity to examine these birds, and the results are possibly worth recording.

*Philohela minor.* Woodcock. One specimen from California recorded by Dr. R. B. Sharpe, "Catalogue of Birds," xxiv, p. 681; this bears a Seebohm label, "E. Mus. Henry Seebohm", and on it is written "*Scolopax minor*, ♂, California, (H. Whitely)." The number in the British Museum Register is written on the back, 96.1.1.97. Writing in 1888, Seebohm in his "The Geographical Distribution of the Charadriidae," says (p. 504) of the Woodcock: "Its range extends northwards to lat. 50°, and southwards into Texas, but its longitudinal range extends from the Atlantic only halfway across the continent." Evidently Seebohm had no California record of the Woodcock when this was written, or if he had, he disregarded it. Henry Whitely was curator of the museum of the Royal Artillery Institution at Woolwich in 1865, where were deposited the natural history collections made by John Keast Lord, naturalist to the British North American Boundary Commission. These collections included a few birds collected by Lord in California. Henry Whitely was for some years a natural history agent, and received a great deal of material from abroad, but the locality "California" will have to be disregarded as far as his authority is concerned.

*Limosa haemastica.* Hudsonian Godwit. Three specimens from California recorded by Dr. R. B. Sharpe, "Catalogue of Birds", xxiv, pp. 391 and 756; all from the Seebohm collection. I found only two of these, both with only the Seebohm label. One is marked "♀", and is probably an adult in winter, the number in the British Museum Register is, 92.8.3.326; the other is marked "♀" and is an adult, and the label bears the British Museum registered number, 96.7.1.820; both have "California" written on the labels. The third, which I was unable to find, is, according to the "Catalogue of Birds" (p. 391), an adult male with the same data and origin. Seebohm in "The Geographical Distribution of the Charadriidae" says (p. 393) that the Hudsonian Godwit has occurred twice in Alaska but nowhere else on the Pacific coast of North America, so these records may also be disregarded. That Seebohm should have had a Woodcock and three Hudsonian Godwits from California in his collection, without comment, and that Sharpe should have published the records, is sufficient reason for a detailed examination of the evidence.

*Pyrhuloxia sinuata sinuata.* Arizona Cardinal. One specimen from California recorded by Dr. R. B. Sharpe, "Catalogue of Birds", xii, p. 159; this has a blank label with "California" and no registered number; the origin was unknown as none is given

in the catalogue, and the locality can be regarded as unreliable.—J. H. FLEMING, *Toronto, Ontario, January 17, 1921.*

**California Pigmy Owl from Cucamonga Canyon, Southern California.**—I wish to record the capture by Gordon Nicholson of Ontario, California, of a male Pigmy Owl (*Glaucidium gnoma californicum*) on November 11, 1920, at an altitude of about 2800 feet in Cucamonga Canyon—a rugged steep-walled canyon about six miles north and east of Upland, San Bernardino County. The bird was sitting in a sycamore tree in the base of the canyon. The stomach was sent to Dr. H. C. Bryant at Berkeley, and he sends the following report as to its contents: Condition of stomach, full; contents, one katydid (*Scudderia furcifera*) and three grasshoppers (*Melanoplus devastator*).—WRIGHT M. PIERCE, *Claremont, California, December 29, 1920.*

**An Addition to the Oregon List of Birds.**—On October 3, 1920, while walking along the banks of the Snake River near Ontario, Oregon, my attention was attracted by a single tern flying over the river. One of our party shot the bird, which proved to be a female Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*). On October 4, a number were observed and another specimen collected. On my return to Portland I was surprised to learn that there was no printed record of the occurrence of this bird in the State. The first specimen secured is now in my possession and I take pleasure in adding this species to the State list.—IRA N. GABRIELSON, *Portland, Oregon.*

**Early Spring Notes on Birds of Coronado Islands, Mexico.**—On March 5, 1921, Messrs. A. W. Anthony, Geo. H. Field and the writer landed on North Coronado Island and camped there until the 9th. On the 7th, we rowed over to Middle Island; but the swell broke so heavily on the rocky shore that we did not try to land. As this is several weeks earlier than any collector that I know of has landed on the islands, some notes on the birds we found may be of interest. The winter has been very dry on the islands and the growth of annual plants is very scanty this season.

Rhinoceros Auklet. *Cerorhinca monocerata*. Mr. Anthony saw one.

Cassin Auklet. *Ptychoramphus aleuticus*. Many nesting burrows had been cleaned out, and a little nest material had been taken into some burrows; but no birds were in the burrows we opened. No birds were seen at sea.

Xantus Murrelet. *Brachyramphus hypoleucus*. Several seen swimming and flying at sea. One shot.

Western Gull *Larus occidentalis*. Thousands were present on North Coronado Island, but nesting had not begun. No other species of gull was seen, and scarcely any immature birds of this species, although immature birds were abundant on San Diego Bay at the time.

Pacific Fulmar. *Fulmarus glacialis glupischa*. Mr. Anthony saw one.

Black-vented Shearwater. *Puffinus opisthomelas*. Several large flocks were feeding on schools of sardines between San Diego and the islands. A few stragglers were flying near the islands.

Farallon Cormorant. *Phalacrocorax auritus albociliatus*. Nests were scattered through the pelican colonies, sets mostly incomplete. A partly incubated set of four was taken.

Brandt Cormorant. *Phalacrocorax penicillatus*. Two small colonies were nesting on nearly perpendicular cliffs at the north end of the island. Looking from above I saw one set of five eggs; others were smaller, probably incomplete.

Baird Cormorant. *Phalacrocorax pelagicus resplendens*. Mr. Anthony saw one cormorant with distinct white flank patches.

California Brown Pelican. *Pelecanus californicus*. The pelican colonies have been enlarged until they now cover nearly all of the east side of North Island. Many hundreds of nests were already occupied, but most of the sets were incomplete. I took one set of four eggs.

Black Oystercatcher. *Haematopus bachmani*. Two shot, another seen.

Sparrow Hawk. *Falco sparverius*. One seen.

Bald Eagle. *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*. An immature Bald Eagle passed over North Coronado Island, pursued by hundreds of Western Gulls making a tremendous racket; but they took care not to come too close to the Eagle.

Duck Hawk. *Falco peregrinus anatum*. One seen.

Say Phoebe. *Sayornis sayus*. One seen.

Intermediate Sparrow. *Zonotrichia leucophrys gambeli*. A number, apparently winter residents, were seen. One shot.

San Clemente Song Sparrow. *Melospiza melodia clementae*. Several seen, two shot. Not very near breeding.

Rock Wren. *Salpinctes obsoletus*. Two seen.—FRANK STEPHENS, *Museum of Natural History, San Diego, California, March 15, 1921.*

**Does the Wren-tit Sing a Scale?**—I have so often met with differences of opinion regarding the notes of the Wren-tit (*Chamaea fasciata*), and these differences of opinion spring from the minds of such excellent bird students, that I am led to offer a word regarding my own impressions of the bird's vocalization. I had thought Dr. J. Grinnell's paper (CONDOR, xv, 1913, pp. 178-181) a pronouncement, almost, of the last word upon the subject; and as I review his excellent article, there appears but little for me to add. In his analysis of notes, under caption A, no. 1, he describes what is perhaps the most commonly recognized performance of this bird in these words: "Loud series of staccato notes all on the same pitch but with decreasing intervals, the last of the series run together to form a trill: pit-pit-pit-pit-pit-tr-r-r-r-r. Several counts gave from three to five of the first, distinctly-uttered notes." With this description of note no. 1, my impression agrees almost absolutely. Only very rarely have I heard the slightest degree of flattening from the original pitch as the interval of time diminishes. Yet again and again, during work with many academic generations of students, have I had the question asked, "What is the bird in the hills that sings down the scale?" I have long since ceased to suggest the Canyon Wren, but attempt instead the call of the Wren-tit (keeping at least on the pitch), and they at once recognize the bird. Just what is the psychology of interpreting this note as a descending scale, it is hard to state, except it be suggestion of falling bodies by the accelerated tempo. Certainly the average listener would not consider that flattening by less than a quarter of a tone could properly be considered as a descending scale.

The only marked decline in pitch that I have recognized for the Wren-tit is described in Grinnell's note no. 3 which he syllabifies as *keer-keer-keer-keer*, with slightly falling pitch. Here the decline in pitch does not exceed one and a half or two tones during the repetition of five to ten notes. Certainly such would constitute a pretty finely chromatic scale.

Perhaps I may be pardoned for adding a suggestion or two in regard to Grinnell's syllabification of note no. 1. The simple *pit-pit-pit*, etc., can be fairly well imitated by the human whistle, but the bird sometimes complicates the performance by a grace note that renders the syllabification more properly *plit-plit-plit*, or even *tupit-tupit-tupit*. I have never yet met the mere human who could reproduce this variant to any degree accurately. Then, again, this note is capable of a remarkable degree of ventriloquism and this fact is made use of by the bird, whether with intent to deceive or not, I can not say; but certainly it produces a deceptive effect.

I appreciate the fact that these remarks do not constitute any decided addition to our sum of knowledge; but it is hoped that they may serve as a corroboration of the previous observations referred to, on this unique bird.—LOYE MILLER, *Southern Branch, University of California, Los Angeles, February 17, 1921.*

**Southern California Screech Owl in Western Orange County.**—Although I had met with this owl in the live oak association of the Puente Hills, ten miles to the northeast, and in the Orange County Park, twenty miles to the east, it was not until 1913 that I observed it in the vicinity of Buena Park. Thirty years ago this vicinity was a treeless plain, but now some of the eucalyptus trees are quite large, especially those on our property. Screech Owls (*Otus asio quercinus*) first appeared in December, 1913, and have since been seen, and more often heard, during every month of the year. I have suspected them of nesting for several years, but as the only large trees are eucalyptus, which afford poor shelter for this purpose, I was rather doubtful until June 13, 1920, when my wife and I found two adults feeding three full-fledged young in some trees near our house. They appeared at dusk on the lower branches of the trees, and the old birds hunted by

flying to the ground and returning to feed the young. We were unable to find out what their prey was. This performance was repeated for several evenings; then they were not seen again, although their soft call-notes were heard frequently throughout the summer. These owls are a welcome addition to our fauna and I hope they will continue to favor us with their presence.—JOHN MCB. ROBERTSON, *Buena Park, California, February 16, 1921.*

**American Crossbill Eating Elm Aphis.**—Opportunity for close observation on the feeding habits of the American Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra minor*) were afforded the writer on the University of Washington campus at Seattle on June 17, 1920. In the mid-morning I heard the *chup, chup, chup* of some Crossbills, and shortly a dozen or more of the birds alighted on the lower branches of some cork elms, within ten feet or less of the ground. The birds were not disturbed by my close approach and it was possible to get within three to five feet of them. Red plumaged males, other individuals of greenish yellow coloration, and one or two with streaking indicative of juveniles were noted in the flock which was scattered through half a dozen adjacent trees.

The birds seemed to prefer to feed while hanging inverted; in a majority of cases this was the position taken even when suitable forage could have been obtained from an upright posture. When climbing from one branch to another a few of the Crossbills were seen to use their bills, after the manner of parrots, but only in making a slight change of position while a bird was hanging upside down, or when regaining an upright position.

No buds were to be seen on the trees and for a short time I was puzzled to know what the birds were feeding upon. They were attacking certain of the leaves which were curled up on one edge, cutting these rolls open and getting something from within. Gathering a few similar leaves from a tree and picking up some that had fallen after being cut open by the birds, it became evident that a woolly aphis, which had caused the curling of the leaf margin was the item of food being sought by the Crossbills. The attack of this insect causes the blade of the leaf to curl over, forming a cylindrical roll within which the aphids can feed and multiply unmolested by most of their enemies.

Further watching of the Crossbills showed that the birds had learned the haunt of these particular aphids and also a method for obtaining them. The roll-like cases were cut open lengthwise, but in rather irregular fashion, as well as could be expected of a species with such an unhandy pair of "scissors"; then the tongue would be inserted and the aphids withdrawn. The process was not as efficient as it would have been with a typical insect-eating species possessed of a slender bill, and many of the insects adhered to the outside of the birds' mandibles. From time to time a bird would cease feeding and wipe the adhering bugs and "juice" from its bill.

That this method is not an entirely novel one with the birds observed by me is indicated by the fact that Visher (*Auk*, xxvi, 1909, p. 150) records briefly similar behavior of Crossbills in taking aphid galls on petioles of cottonwood in South Dakota. Still other observers have reported the taking of insect food by Crossbills. "Worms" [probably borers] have been eaten in South Carolina (Wayne, *Auk*, v, 1888, p. 208), and hairy caterpillars, the larvae of *Clisiocampa disstria* at Brandon, Vermont (M. M. Miller, *Auk*, xvi, 1899, p. 362), while in California lepidopterous pupae have been found in the crop of *Loxia curvirostra bendirci* near Lake Tahoe (L. H. Miller, *CONDOR*, xxii, 1920, p. 78.—TRACY I. STORER, *Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, Berkeley, California, March 15, 1921.*

**Further Notes on the Harlequin Duck's Food Habits.**—The following may be of interest, with reference to Dr. Bryant's note, "The Harlequin Duck in the Yosemite Valley" (*CONDOR*, xxiii, p. 35), in which he says, that "apparently the Harlequin does not procure all of its food by diving . . .". On May 14, 1914, I was making my way up St. Leon Creek, British Columbia, when I saw a pair of Harlequin Ducks (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) sitting out on a sand-bar, busily engaged in preening. A thick undergrowth enabled me to get very close to them. I had been watching them for several minutes, when another male flew down the creek and settled close to the pair. The first male resented this intrusion, and drove the new arrival into the water, and he was at once carried away by the swift water and lost to sight. The pair soon followed him into the creek, and I fully expected to lose sight of them, too; but they immediately com-

menced diving and I was surprised to see the headway they made against the current, which was very swift at this point. Coming to the surface, they were swept down stream and dived again to recover lost ground. I soon saw that the feet were not used to swim with, but that the birds shoved themselves along with them over the stony bottom, in very much the same way that the Dipper moves forward while under the water in swift current.

Apparently becoming tired by these exertions, the ducks ceased diving and were soon swept out of sight. Later in the day I saw a pair at the mouth of the creek where it empties into the Arrow Lake; both were diving in the deep water, and the birds were immersed for a far longer period here, than they were in the swift water. Soon the pair moved along the shore into a small bay, the beach of which is almost entirely made up of large granite boulders, at this time partly covered by high water. I kept the pair under observation with binoculars for about an hour, and during this time, though they fed continuously, I never once saw either bird completely submerged. Occasionally one would plunge its head beneath a shelving rock, sending out a spout of water with its feet; but more often they searched between the boulders at the water's edge, finding, apparently, the drowned ants and other insects that a north breeze was bringing ashore in great abundance from the surface of the lake.—WALTER B. JOHNSTONE, *Edgewood, Arrow Lake, British Columbia, March 4, 1921.*

**Duck Hawk Wintering in Ontario, California.**—During the first part of January, 1920, in the vicinity of Upland, California, a pair of falcons were seen flying high overhead, uttering their piercing cries. The birds were again seen, sitting in a large blue gum tree located at the corner of an orange grove about one-half mile from where they were first seen and perhaps two miles from the main business district of Ontario. These birds were far too wary to be collected. The birds stayed in this general locality until about the middle of February and were not seen again after that until about December 1 of the same year when they were located in the same large blue gum. On December 19, one of the birds was shot and proved to be an immature female Duck Hawk (*Falco peregrinus anatum*). On December 31 the other was collected. This bird was a male, adult. The stomach of the first bird collected was empty, and we are indebted to Dr. H. C. Bryant for a report on the stomach of the bird collected December 31. It contained largely feathers, while the gullet held the feet, a few bones and feathers of the Western Mourning Dove (*Zenaidura macroura marginella*), and pieces of flesh, apparently from the same bird.—GORDON NICHOLSON and WRIGHT M. PIERCE, *Claremont, California, March 4, 1921.*

**The White-eared Hummingbird in the Catalina Mountains, Arizona.**—I want to report the White-eared Hummingbird (*Basilinna leucotis*) as occurring in the Santa Catalina Mountains, Arizona. In 1915, a female came close to my camp by the canyon stream several successive mornings. So far as I know this bird has never been reported nearly as far from the International line. Both the Huachuca and Chiricahua mountains touch the Mexican line. I am particularly interested in the bird because I discovered it in the Huachucas, and Dr. Fisher in the Chiricahuas, in the same month. Both specimens taken were females.

That makes ten species of hummingbirds for the Catalina Mountains, namely, Rivoli, Blue-throated, White-eared, Broad-tailed, Black-chinned, Broad-billed, Costa, Allen, Rufous and Calliope.—RICHARD D. LUSK, *Winkelman, Arizona, February 22, 1921.*

**On the Flocking of Blackbirds.**—In the November, 1920, issue of THE CONDOR I read a note relative to different species of blackbirds flocking together. While living in southern Nevada (Spring Valley, Lincoln County) a number of years ago, I saw three kinds of blackbirds in the same flock many times. One year (1904) the Yellow-headed Blackbirds made their appearance and far outnumbered the Brewer and Red-winged. In later years there were a few Yellow-heads, but not nearly so many as in 1904. Some years they did not appear at all. I have not been in that region since 1909, but have often wondered just what was the significance of the irregular appearance of the Yellow-heads.—MARGUERITE RICE, *San Gabriel, California, February 20, 1921.*